

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 AGR-10 FDRE-00 IGA-01 SP-02

AID-05 EB-07 NSC-05 CIEP-02 TRSE-00 SS-15 STR-04

OMB-01 CEA-01 COME-00 L-03 H-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-02 USIA-15 PRS-01 (ISO) W

----- 026054

R 211459 Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3691

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION USUN

UNCLAS BUCHAREST 3418

PASS AGR FOR HUME, G&F, F&O, S&TP, LDP
FOR AID/FDRC

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID, EAGR, RO

SUBJECT: ROMANIAN AGRICULTURAL CONDITIONS

REF: (A) STATE 166994; (B) STATE 167634; (C) BUCHAREST 3226

1. ON JULY 18, AMBASSADOR, AGATT, ANDECON OFFICERS HAD MEETINGS WITH DEPUTY MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE STANCIU AND MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE PATAN ON CROP CONDITIONS AND POSSIBLE IMPORT REQUIREMENTS FOR AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES. MINISTRIES ARE STILL ANALYZING FLOOD IMPACT AND SOME STATISTICS REQUESTED REPORTEDLY ARE NOT AVAILABLE.

2. STANCIU REPEATED SOME OF THE DATA GIVEN EARLIER BY MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE MICULESCU (REF C) AND GAVE SOME UNCLASSIFIED

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REVISED DATA ON AREA LOST. TOTAL AGRICULTURAL AREA (STATE AND COOPERATIVE) DESTROYED 1.1 MILLION HECTARES (INCLUDING GRAIN 500,000 HA; SUNFLOWERS 38-40,000 HA.; FORAGE CROPS 100-110,000 HA).

3. STANCIU SAID THAT EARLIER THIS YEAR A WHEAT CROP OF 6.5-6.6 MILLION TONS HAD BEEN ANTICIPATED BUT HE PERSONALLY FELT IT WOULD BE CUT BY ABOUT 20 PERCENT. ACCORDING TO STANCIU IT IS TOO EARLY TO ESTIMATE THE ROMANIAN CORN CROP. IN SOUTHERN ROMANIA JULY 25 -AUGUST 20 IS A CRITICAL PERIOD FOR CORN DEVELOPMENT. CURRENTLY CORN IS GOOD TO VERY GOOD IN THE SOUTH (ALMOST 60 PERCENT OF CROP), POOR IN THE TRANS-CARPATHIAN AREA, AND IN THE NORTH (ABOUT 25 PERCENT) AND FLOODS HAVE HURT THE CROP IN THE BANAT (ABOUT 15 PERCENT). PATAN CHARACTERIZED CORN CONDITION AS VERY GOOD.

4. ACCORDING TO STANCIU, ROMANIA WILL NEED TO IMPORT AT LEAST 100,000 TONS OF FEEDGRAINS BY THE END OF SEPTEMBER (REF B). THIS FIGURE TAKES INTO ACCOUNT INCREASED FEEDING OF WHEAT. DURING THE JULY-SEPTEMBER QUARTER, BARLEY IS A MAJOR INGREDIENT IN FEED RATIONS BUT THIS YEAR'S CROP IS SMALLER THAN ANTICIPATED AND OF UNUSUALLY LOW QUALITY.

5. DESPITE STATEMENTS TO THE CONTRARY BY PANTAN, WE FEEL THAT SOME WHEAT IMPORTS MAY BE NECESSARY FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS: (A) WHEAT STOCKS ARE PROBABLY VERY LOW FOLLOWING LAST YEAR'S POOR CROP; (B) DUE TO THE POOR QUALITY OF THE 1975 CROP, A LARGER PROPORTION OF THE WHEAT WILL BE USED FOR ANIMAL FEED AND WASTE WILL BE ABNORMALLY HIGH; (C) ROMANIANS HAVE TOLD WFP PERSONNEL THAT THEY NEED AN UNSPECIFIED QUANTITY OF WHEAT FLOUR FOR EMERGENCY RELIEF; AND (D) SOME IMPORTS MAY BE NEEDED TO HELP MEET ROMANIAN EXPORT COMMITMENTS.

6. GRAIN - BASED ON INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM MIN AGR AND MIN FOR TRADE, DATA FROM REFTELS AND TRAVEL OBSERVATIONS, THE FOLLOWING SUPPLY-DEMAND BALANCE WERE DEVELOPED. (AREA - 1,000 HA.; YIELD - Q/HA.; ALL OTHERS -1,000 MT)

	AREA	YIELD	PRODUCTION	IMPORTS	EXPORTS	CONSUMPTION
WHEAT	2200	22.7	5,0#2	200	100	5100
RYE	40	12.5	50	-	-	50

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BARLEY	325	24.6	800	125	-	925
OATS	115	10.4	120	25	-	145
CORN	3150	25.4	8,000	400	200	8,200
TOTAL	5830	24.0	13,970	750	3000	14,420

THE CORN YIELD ESTIMATE CAN VARY BY PLUS OR MINUS

3 QUINALS PER HECTARE DEPENDING ON WEATHER CONDITIONS

DUJDING THE NEXT MONTH AND A HALF. THUS, PRODUCTION CAN VARY

1.0 MILLION TONS ABOVE OR BELOW THE 8.0 MILLION TON ESTIMATE.

7. OILSEEDS - SUNFLOWERS REPORTEDLY OCCUPY ABOUT 520,000 HECTARES. BASED ON CROP CONDITIONS (REF D), AGATT FEELS YIELDS WILL BE SLIGHTLY BELOW NORMAL AND ESTIMATE THE SUNFLOWER SEED CROP AT 700,000 TONS. MIN AG DID NOT PROVIDE DATA ON SOYBEANS. AGATT ESTIMATES PLANTED AREA AT 250,000 HAC., HARVESTED AT 240,000 HA. AND PRODUCTION AT 300,000 MT. DESPITE GROWING DEMAND DUE TO INCREASED ANIMAL NUMBERS, DOMESTIC PROTEIN MEAL SUPPLIES FROM THE 1975 CROP WILL ONLY APPROXIMATE THE 1974 LEVEL. SUNFLOWER SEED OIL CURRENTLY IS IN SHORT SUPPLY IN STORES. PATAN DID NOT EXPRESS ANY SPECIFIC INTEREST IN THE POSSIBLE IMPORT OF VEGETABLE OILS UNDER CCC INDICATING THAT SOYBEAN OIL IS ONLY USED FOR BLENDING PURPOSES. STANCIU PLACED ROMANIAN SOYBEAN CAKE OR MEAL IMPORT NEEDS AT 50,000 TONS (JUL-SEPT) AND 50-60,000 TONS (OCT-DEC). HE INDICATED THAT REQUIREMENTS FOR 1976 WILL NOT BE KNOWN UNTIL SEPTEMBER.

8. SUGAR BEETS - APPROXIMATELY 30,000 HA. OUT OF THE ESTIMATED 220,000 HA. OF SUGAR BEETS PLANTED WERE REPORTEDLY DESTROYED BY THE FLOODS. WITH NEAR AVERAGE YIELDS, A CROP OF ONLY 4.3 MILLION TONS OF SUGAR BEETS WOULD BE HARVESTED. THIS IS ABOUT 14 PERCENT BELOW THE 1974 LEVEL, ROUGHLY 85,000 TONS LESS ON A REFINED SUGAR BASIS. ROMANIA HAS REQUESTED SUGAR FROM WFP. INCREASED SUGAR IMPORTS CAN BE EXPECTED IN 1975/76. SUGAR CURRENTLY IS IN SHORT SUPPLY IN STORES.

9. LIVESTOCK - PRELIMINARY DATA INDICATE THAT LOSSES OF LIVESTOCK ARE NOT TOO LARGE; CATTLE 15,000 HEAD, PIGS 70,000 AND SHEEP 100,000. SINCE THE GREATEST PROPORTION OF THE LOSSES WERE IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR, INFORMATION IS STILL FRAGMENTARY AND WILL NOT BE COMPLETE UNTIL INSURANCE FIGURES ARE AVAILABLE. THE PLAN HAD CALLED FOR INCREASES

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IN ANIMAL NUMBERS IN 1975. STANCIU STATED THAT BECAUSE OF THE FLOOD THE GROWTH IN NUMBERS WILL BE SMALLER THAN PLANNED. FEED SUPPLIES, ESPECIALLY THE AVAILABILITY OF HIGH QUALITY CONCENTRATE FEEDS (INCLUDING STARTER AND PRE-STARTER FEEDS), HAVE BEEN DISRUPTED BY THE FLOODS. THEREFORE, ROMANIANS ARE WORRIED ABOUT THE MORTALITY RATE OF YOUNG LIVESTOCK WHICH COULD ADVERSELY AFFECT NEXT YEAR'S PLAN FULFILLMENT RESULTS. IN THE SHORT RUN 100,000 SOWS, ONE MILLION YOUNG PIGS AND 100,000 CALVES COULD BE AFFECTED. DURING THE NEXT FEW WEEKS THE ROMANINAS NEED TO IMPORT PROTEIN SUPPLEMENTS, VITAMINS AND ANTIBIOTICS FOR MIXING WITH DOMESTICALLY PRODUCED GRAIN FOR THESE LIVESTOCK. A MASSIVE INNOCULATION PROGRAM REPORTEDLY IS UNDER WAY TO PREVENT A POSSIBLE OUTBREAK OF DISEASE INCLUDING FOOT AND MOUTH.

BARNES

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NNN

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** UNCLASSIFIED

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